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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/942,767	08/31/2001	Naoki Higa	Q66073	9210
7590	03/19/2004		EXAMINER	
SUGHRUE, MION, ZINN, MACPEAK & SEAS, PLLC 2100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Washington, DC 20037			CREPEAU, JONATHAN	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1746	

DATE MAILED: 03/19/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.	09/942,767	Applicant(s)	MF
Examiner	Jonathan S. Crepeau	Art Unit	1746

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM
THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 August 2001.
2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2/27/03.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it is longer than 150 words (~15 lines). Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1-4 and 7-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Twogood et al (U.S. Patent 3,839,093). Regarding claim 1, the reference is directed to a sealed-type lead acid battery (see col. 2, line 33). The battery comprises a case having an upper wall (16) having a hole (see Fig. 1). An annular protrusion (36) is present on the inner surface of the upper wall surrounding the hole (see Fig. 2). A pole (30) is connected to the electrode and is disposed beneath the hole (see Fig. 1). A male thread element (38) having one end embedded in the pole and the other end protruding therefrom extends through the hole (see Fig. 1). A female thread member (40) is engaged with the male thread member and is tightened such that the annular protrusion bites into the upper surface of the pole (see Fig. 3). Regarding claim 2, the male thread member acts as a terminal (see col. 5, line 17). Regarding claim 3, the male thread

member has a flange portion (42) embedded in the pole (see Fig. 1). Regarding claim 4, a surrounding wall is present on the inner surface of the upper wall, the inner surface of the surrounding wall and the outer surface of the pole coming in contact with each other (see Fig. 3). Regarding claim 7, the pole comprises lead (col. 3, line 25 et seq.). Regarding claims 8 and 9, an O-ring may be used between the inner surface of the upper wall and the upper surface of the pole (see col. 6, lines 47-55). Regarding claim 10, a plurality of annular protrusions may be present (see col. 4, line 66).

Thus, the instant claims are anticipated.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 5 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Twogood et al.

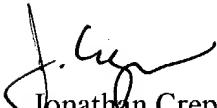
The reference is applied to claims 1-4 and 7-9 for the reasons stated above. However, the reference does not expressly teach that the pole is tapered (claim 5) or that the surrounding wall is tapered (claim 6).

However, the invention as a whole would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made because the artisan would be motivated to use tapered components in the battery Twogood et al. Such tapering would serve to increase the snugness of the fit between the pole and the surrounding wall. Additionally, it has generally been held that changes in shape are generally not sufficient to distinguish over the prior art (MPEP §2144.04 (IV)(B)). Accordingly, the subject matter of claims 5 and 6 would be rendered obvious to the skilled artisan.

Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jonathan Crepeau whose telephone number is (571) 272-1299. The examiner can normally be reached Monday-Friday from 9:30 AM - 6:00 PM EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Randy Gulakowski, can be reached at (571) 272-1302. The phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 272-1700. Documents may be faxed to the central fax server at (703) 872-9306.



Jonathan Crepeau
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 1746
March 12, 2004